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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: JANUARY 28, 2010

Summary: Coverage of Prime Minister Gilani's statement reiterating the government's commitment to implement the Supreme Court's nullification of the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) dominated headlines in all major newspapers on Thursday morning. Newspapers also reported that the government will not reopen the Swiss cases against President Zardari as he enjoys immunity granted by the Parliament. Several dailies highlighted reports that NATO, Russia and Pakistan gave "unanimous backing" to the new international strategy in Afghanistan. Newspapers widely covered U.S. CENTCOM chief General Petraeus' remarks lauding Pakistani forces for their operations against the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and its affiliates in Malakand and South Waziristan. "Dawn," reported the Pentagon spokesman's statement urging India to be "transparent with Pakistan about its activities in Afghanistan." All major newspapers reported that the UN lifted sanctions on five former Taliban officials ahead of International Conference in London. Ambassador Holbrooke's statement that the U.S. will support Taliban reintegration was also displayed prominently. "The News," reported that talks are underway between the NWFP administration and the U.S. regarding massive hydroelectric power projects. Media extensively covered the unanimous approval of the anti-money laundering bill by the National Assembly. End Summary.

#### TOP STORIES

News Story: Only Parliament Can Withdraw Presidential Immunity - "The News" (01/28)

"Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on Wednesday reiterated his commitment to implement the detailed judgment of the Supreme Court on the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) except for the part pertaining to the reopening of the Swiss cases owing to constitutional immunity enjoyed by the president. It is only Parliament that can withdraw this immunity and if this is done I am ready to take action. Nobody can rewrite the Constitution as this is the sovereign right of Parliament, he said while addressing the National Assembly on Wednesday."

News Story: NATO, Russia And Pakistan Back New Afghan Plan - "Dawn" (01/28)

"NATO said on Wednesday it had secured new pledges of support for its Afghan operation, and its top military officer said he believed international solidarity meant the tide had turned in the struggle against the Taliban. 'The mood has changed, the tide has changed: we will succeed, we are convinced we will succeed,' Admiral Giampaolo Di Paola said after a meeting of all countries contributing to the NATO-led military effort in Afghanistan."

News Story: COAS Asks NATO To Understand Pak Perspective - "Dawn"  
(01/28)

"... General Kayani stressed on NATO to realize Pakistan's strategy and perspective on region's security situation and called for enhancement of Pakistan's role in finding a solution to the Afghanistan problem. Addressing the two-day session of the NATO's Military Committee here on Wednesday, General Kayani said in order to win the war on terror, confidence between NATO and Pakistani forces is needed, along with cooperation in intelligence sectors. NATO and Pakistan can only defeat their common enemy if both sides have confidence on each other. Sharing of intelligence can play a vital role, the Army Chief said."

News Story: Petraeus Sees Deal In South Waziristan - "Dawn" (01/28)

"Pakistan may now be able to reach a deal in South Waziristan that allows traditional tribal elements to return to the area, says U.S. Central Command Chief Gen. David Petraeus. Speaking at the Institute for the Study of War, Washington, Gen. Petraeus also noted that the Pakistani military had caused considerable setback to the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan forcing them to withdraw some from some of their key strongholds."

News Story: Indian Role In Afghanistan Needs To Be Spelt Out: U.S.  
- "Dawn" (01/28)

"The United States urged India on Wednesday to be transparent with Pakistan about their activities in Afghanistan. At a briefing at the Pentagon, spokesman Geoff Morrell also discounted Indian role in training Afghan security forces. The Pentagon press secretary said that U.S. Defence Secretary Robert Gates had discussed the Afghan situation with Indian leaders, including the issues that concerned Pakistan, when he visited New Delhi last week."

News Story: UN Sanctions On 5 Afghan Taliban Leaders Lifted -  
"Dawn" (01/28)

"A UN Security Council panel said on Tuesday it had removed five top Taliban officials from its list of individuals subjected to sanctions imposed over their links with Al Qaeda. The move coincided with an announcement by Afghan President Hamid Karzai that he would press for Taliban names to be removed from the UN blacklist at a major conference on Afghanistan in London on Thursday."

News Story: U.S. To Back Taliban Reintegration: Holbrooke - "Daily Times" (01/28)

"The U.S. will support a plan to reintegrate Taliban fighters set to be announced by Afghan President Hamid Karzai at an international conference in London, U.S. Special Representative Richard Holbrooke on Wednesday. Holbrooke said Karzai will outline the plan on Thursday to convince low-level and midlevel Taliban fighters who don't back Al Qaeda to give up their fight against U.S. and NATO forces."

News Story: NWFP Talking To U.S. For Massive Hydel Power Projects -  
"The News" (01/28)

"As federal authorities are bent upon obtaining expensive rental power projects, the Frontier government, on the other hand, has sought massive U.S. investment for much cheaper hydroelectric power in the provincial jurisdiction. 'We are shortly submitting before the U.S. authorities, the power projects, besides identifying sites for maximum electricity from our province having potential of up to 48,000 megawatts (MW),' a member of the NWFP's special body on energy and power told The News. U.S. Special Envoy Richard Holbrooke, U.S. Ambassador Anne W. Patterson and U.S. Embassy Economic Wing's Ms. Robin Raphael are prominent American authorities with whom the Frontier government contacted and 'received an encouraging response.'"

News Story: NA Approves Anti-Money Laundering Bill Unanimously -  
"The News" (01/28)

"The National Assembly on Wednesday unanimously passed Anti-Money Laundering Bill 2009, which provides for maximum punishment of

imprisonment up to 10 years and a fine of up to Rs 1 million."

News Story: U.S. Presses Pakistan To Sign N-Deal - "Dawn" (01/28)

"The United States is pressing Pakistan to sign the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty without delay but Islamabad insists that India must also be asked to reduce its nuclear stockpile, the U.S. media reported on Wednesday. U.S. officials have urged Pakistan to 'drop all resistance to the FMCT,' warning it was imperative that the measure move forward in 2010.... The U.S. media reported President Obama had pushed for the ban, and his administration had urged a key UN disarmament body to persuade Pakistan to join the FMCT talks in Geneva."

#### TERRORISM/MILITARY ISSUES

News Story: Malik Says No Xe-Trained Officials In PM Squad - "Dawn" (01/28)

"U.S. private security contractor Blackwater, formerly known as Xe Security, was neither operating in Pakistan nor its trained security officers were part of Prime Minister's safety escort, Federal Interior Minister Rehman Malik said on Wednesday."

News Story: No Sight Of Drones In NWA After 'Crash' - "The News" (01/28)

"Following the crash of two U.S. drones in North Waziristan in just one week, the tribesmen were surprised on Wednesday when they could not see any spy aircraft during the past two days."

News Story: Taliban Unimpressed With United Nation's Gesture - "The News" (01/28)

"In a decision that should have been taken much earlier, the names of five former Taliban ministers were removed from the UN Security Council's 'blacklist' after having been sanctioned in late 2001 for having links with al-Qaeda but the move failed to have any impact on some of those whose names were deleted and was summarily rejected by the mainstream Mullah Omar-led Taliban movement."

News Story: Call To Stop NATO Supplies Through Balochistan - "Dawn" (01/28)

"The Jamaat-i-Islami has urged the government to change its policy of facilitating through Balochistan supplies for NATO forces in Afghanistan. Addressing a press conference on Wednesday, Party's Provincial Chief Abdul Matin Akhundzada said the fact that several trucks carrying fuel for NATO forces had been attacked in the province could be used by the United States as the basis for launching drone attacks in Balochistan."

News Story: North Waziristan Elders Warned Against Sheltering Taliban - "Daily Times" (01/28)

"The political administration has warned tribal chieftains of a military operation if they do not take action against terrorists who have fled Mehsud areas of South Waziristan and taken refuge in North Waziristan, tribal and official sources said on Wednesday."

News Story: 15 Killed In Bajaur Clashes - "The News" (01/28)

"Fifteen militants were killed during clashes with security forces and Salarzai Lashkar and air raids and artillery shelling in various areas of Bajaur Agency on Wednesday, official sources said. One soldier also lost his life in the clashes."

#### POLITICAL ISSUES

News Story: London Conference Marks Sea-Change In Afghan Approach - "Dawn" (01/28)

"A conference which only a week ago looked like the political stunt of an enfeebled British government now looks like it could mark the beginning of the end of the war in Afghanistan. This week saw an unexpected groundswell of support - including from top military commanders - for an eventual political settlement with the Taliban. 'There seems to be an emerging consensus that when all is said and

done, the Afghan Jihadi movement - in one form or another - will be part of the government in Kabul,' U.S. think tank Stratfor said."

News Story: London Talks - Handover To Afghan Control In Focus - "The Nation" (01/28)

"Strengthening Afghanistan's army ahead of handling security to local control will be the focus of a 60-nation conference in London on Thursday, alongside President Hamid Karzai's peace moves."

News Story: U.S. Will Fail To Split Taliban: Ex-ISI Official - "Daily Times" (01/28)

"Attempts by the Afghan government and its allies to split the Taliban by luring away foot soldiers and isolating leaders will fail, former official of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), Brigadier (r) Sultan Amir Tarar said on Wednesday. Afghan President Hamid Karzai is expected to present details of his plan to reach out to the Taliban at an international conference in London on Thursday. But Tarar, who knows Taliban leaders, said Taliban fighters would not break with their leader, Mullah Omar."

News Story: Afghan Reintegration Plan A 'Trick': Militants - "Daily Times" (01/28)

"Militants on Wednesday dismissed an Afghan government plan aimed at persuading fighters to lay down their arms in return for cash as a 'trick,' saying the only solution to the war would be the withdrawal of foreign troops. They also dismissed a London conference on Afghanistan's future as 'a waste of time.'"

News Story: London Meet On Afghanistan Will Fail - "The Nation" (01/28)

"Iran said on Wednesday it will not attend an international meeting on Afghanistan being held in London, saying it will be a failure. "Iran does not consider this meeting to be purposeful and useful and so it will not participate in it," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast was quoted as saying by Mehr news agency."

#### ECONOMY/ENVIRONMENT

News Story: U.S. To Help In Upgrading Agriculture Technology - "Dawn" (01/28)

"The U.S. has assured to continue support for the development of agriculture technology in Pakistan to boost productivity and improve farmers' income. 'Growth in the agriculture sector would lead to the prosperity in Pakistan,' said the U.S. Consulate General in Lahore Bryan D. Hunt in Islamabad on Wednesday."

News Story: No Pressure To Drop Pak-Iran Gas Project: Qamar - "Dawn" (01/28)

"Petroleum Minister Syed Naveed Qamar has said there is no pressure from the United States or any security agency to abandon the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project. Talking to journalists in Islamabad on Wednesday, the minister said a technical agreement between Pakistan and Iran would be signed before Feb 15 when a gas sale-purchase deal between the two countries would expire."

News Story: Cabinet Okays 8 Rental Power Projects - "Daily Times" (01/28)

"The Federal Cabinet has given the go-ahead to eight Rental Power Projects (RPPs) following the approval of an Asian Development Bank (ADB) report presented in the cabinet meeting, Federal Minister for Water and Power Raja Pervaiz Ashraf said on Wednesday.... He said the ADB has also asked the government to review its options before any further action on six RPPs with a capacity of generating 838MW that were signed but not yet effective."

News Story: Over 30pc Uplift Funds Earmarked For Security - "Dawn" (01/28)

"The Cabinet decided on Wednesday to make major budgetary adjustments, including diversion of more than 30 per cent (Rs170

billion) from development and income support program for the poor towards security expenditure, changes in macroeconomic estimates and at-source deduction of provincial electricity bills."

News Story: Plan To Sell Farmland To Foreigners Intact: FM - "Dawn" (01/28)

"Pakistan will press ahead with plans to lease or sell farmland to foreign investors despite United Nations concern over such deals, arguing the land would otherwise lie fallow, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said."

#### EDITORIALS/OPINIONS

Editorial: Weaving Peace, an editorial in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (01/28)

"The many threads that when woven together make up the Afghan conundrum come together today in London with the opening of the conference hosted by the British. For the first time in many years there is a concerted international effort to find a way out of war and into peace.... At some point Afghanistan is going to have to be handed back to the Afghans - and that has to include the Taliban. Karzai is not a 'forever' figure and foreign troops are not there forever either. The London conference is about honorable exits on one side and dignified entrances on the other. Team Taliban are probably deep in their briefing papers at this very moment."

Editorial: Taliban As Part Of An Afghan Solution, an editorial in the country's premier business newspaper, "Business Recorder" (cir. 25,000) (01/28)

"The Western military leaders insist that talks can succeed only if the allies are able to speak from a position of strength. This was made clear by British Army Chief General Sir David Richards, CENTCOM chief General David Petraeus and commander U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan General Stanley McChrystal, who spoke ahead of the conference in London. It remains to be seen if the Taliban are willing to hold peace talks with Karzai and the allied powers. They have, in the past, demanded an immediate return of the allied troops from Afghanistan and a payment of full costs for rebuilding the country as the minimum price for a deal. A lot of background diplomatic activity has, however, been going on recently involving Saudi Arabia and a number of other Gulf countries to bring the Taliban to the peace talks."

Editorial: U.S. Agenda Has Been Followed A Lot, an editorial note in the second-largest, nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (01/28)

"Addressing an American think tanks, the American Progress the U.S. National Security Advisor James Jones said that American success in Afghanistan is dependent upon Pakistan's resolve and cooperation in the war against extremism.... The U.S. Security Advisor seems to be worried more about Pakistan.... In Afghanistan American officials are advising President Karzai to initiate dialogue with the Taliban and extremist groups, but American authorities are pressing Pakistan for accelerating the fight against extremists.... The Pakistan Army has decided correctly that it will not launch a new military operation for one year.... America should solve its problems in Afghanistan itself and pave the way for the return of 3 million Afghan refugees, who are the cause of disputes between the two countries."

Editorial: Dialogue With Taliban: Get Prepared First, an editorial in the leading mass circulation populist, often sensational Urdu daily "Jang" (cir. 300,000) (01/28)

"The Karzai formula unveiled in the Istanbul Conference, which necessitates the urgency to engage Taliban politically, reflects the thinking of the U.S. and other foreign powers present in Afghanistan, therefore it certainly has the backing of these countries. But all the stakeholders need to thoroughly delve into the modes to implement this formula and weigh the chances of its success or failure. Any effort to divide the Afghan resistance forces into the 'Bad Taliban' and 'Good Taliban' may lead to more bloodshed in the country. Besides, the international community must

also take Pakistan and Iran on board because these two neighboring countries are directly affected from any change in the internal situation of Afghanistan."

Editorial: Indications Of Taliban's Coming To Power In Afghanistan, an editorial in the popular rightist Urdu-language daily "Ausaf" (cir. 10,000) (01/28)

"In the Istanbul Conference, the world powers have agreed to hold negotiations with the Taliban. It is a clear manifestation that Washington and its allies have finally reach the conclusion that Taliban can no longer be ignored when it comes to stabilizing Afghanistan. In this scenario, we will, once again, see the Taliban at the helm of power in Afghanistan in near future. To withdraw its forces from Afghanistan, Washington will badly need our help. The fast-changing geo-political situation of Afghanistan has provided Pakistan a golden chance to force the U.S. to help resolve the Kashmir issue. Hence, the government should fully exploit this much-awaited opportunity."

Editorial: Afghan Reconciliation, an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (01/28)

"Whether it has Washington's blessings or not, Pakistan would have to devise a plan of winning over the angry tribesmen that serves its national interests. The U.S. would do well to honor its commitments about development projects in FATA. It is close to four years when President Bush first talked of reconstruction opportunity zones, but still the U.S. Congress has not passed the required bill. If the U.S. and Western allies are sincere in seeing Pakistan develop, they must listen to its repeated calls for investment in the country and provide it market access."

Editorial: Sound Advice, an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (01/28)

"Any kind of public accusations or public finger-pointing, quite frankly, that does not serve any of us well. That doesn't mean we won't have disagreements. But I hope that we can do that privately, and not publicly. We could not agree more with Admiral Mike Mullen and urge Pakistani, Indian and American officials to take note of his comments.... Once again, unnecessary and unwanted - and perhaps even self-defeating for the Americans. We are not suggesting that Pakistani, Indian and American officials start doing everything in secret and hide even more than they already do from the public. Transparency and openness are foundational. But so is common sense, and that is what seems to be lacking on occasion. Our advice: listen to Admiral Mullen."

Editorial: Why Is India Building Tension?, an editorial in the Islamabad-based rightist English daily "Pakistan Observer" (cir. 5,000) (01/28)

"We apprehend that India, in collusion with its Western mentors, was on a collision path and bent upon doing some mischief. This was evident from the recent statement of American Defence Secretary Robert Gates in New Delhi about danger of action against Pakistan by India if there was re-run of Mumbai like incidents in future. This is highly regrettable as Pakistan has diverted its military sources from the Eastern to the Western borders at the instance of the United States and Western countries, which want presence of Pakistani troops in good numbers on the Western front to make life easier for their occupation troops in Afghanistan.... There are, therefore, reasons to believe that India was gradually building tension to put Pakistan under more pressure and this calls for a comprehensive review of our military strategy and the need for a diplomatic offensive to expose Indian designs."

Editorial: Indian Aggressiveness, an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (01/28)

"It is time Pakistan took a clear cut and strong position on all the legal and military infringements India is indulging in at will. The dark shadow of U.S. support also looms behind these infractions of India since the former has not said a word in protest to New Delhi despite being a strategic partner of India's. Pakistan needs to also put the U.S. on notice regarding India. Pakistan should take every

threatening move by India seriously as our history has shown India never wastes an opportunity to undermine our existence. Nothing has changed in the Indian psyche."

Editorial: Response To The Enemy, an editorial in the second-largest, nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (01/28)

"Indian designs against our security are not hidden. Under American patronage it has already increased its military capability three times more than us thus becoming a threat for our as well as region's security.... The Indian military's repeated shelling on the Line of Control is a link in the chain of events.... Being soft to the enemy is tantamount to being killed by it. We should respond to the enemy in the language it understands."

Editorial: Indian Firing On Pakistani Check-Posts, an editorial in the center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" (cir. 10,000) (01/28)

"America, Britain and other world powers should think over Indian attitude and press India for implementing the UN resolutions on Kashmir.... The Pakistan Army and the people cannot pay required attention to the war against terrorism if their eastern border is not peaceful."

Editorial: [India's] Violation Of The Working Boundary And Demands Of The Situation, an editorial in the liberal Urdu daily "Express" (cir. 25,000) (01/28)

"It is possible that the recent incidents of border violations [by India] were the result of some misunderstanding. However, in the current climate, with terrorists running rampant in the region and wanting to foment a confrontation between the two countries, it is imperative that both sides exercise caution.... Another aspect of the working boundary's violation is that it could be the starting point of a major adventure by India.... If the Indian government is thinking of such an adventure, it should review its decision because such an adventure by India would not remain limited. Such an adventure can also backfire when the two countries in question are armed with nuclear weapons. American officials -- who support Indian policies and talk like Indians -- should also play a role in this regard."

Editorial: India's Heinous Ambitions Are Dangerous For The World, an editorial in the Lahore-based populist center-right Urdu daily "Khabrain" (cir. 50,000) (01/28)

"Pakistan government should immediately inform the UN, China, Britain, Russia and friendly Islamic states of India's dangerous and heinous designs. Pakistan should inform the international community that Indian ambitions could endanger the entire world. Pakistan would be compelled to respond if India does not stop its provocative acts, and once this happens, there could be a likelihood of a nuclear war as well."

Editorial: India Should See Reason, an editorial in the Lahore-based independent Urdu daily "Din" (circ. 5000) (01/28)

"If India does not change its track, its provocative acts [reference to the shelling] and baseless allegations could trigger a war in the region. In such a scenario, bilateral relations could take a dangerous turn - leading 1.5 billion people of the region to end up dead, hunger-stricken, or victims of radiation."

Opinion: Stinging Rebuke, an op-ed by M. Saeed Khalid in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (01/28)

"By not giving a date for the completion of the withdrawal, Obama is signaling to the Taliban that the final position would depend on the outcome of efforts to reach a negotiated settlement in some kind of power-sharing arrangement. If that goal remains unachievable, then Obama may want to carry out a low-intensity war with a tolerable level of losses to prevent the Taliban from overrunning the urban centers, especially the provincial capitals and Kabul. Will 2010 bring a significant change in the Taliban's attitude to negotiations with the U.S.? If their declaration to mark 30 years of Afghanistan's invasion by the Soviets is an indicator, there can be little hope for resolution of the conflict. The only way of

de-escalation in Afghanistan can be the reduction of foreign forces and the interposing of a peacekeeping force with an international mandate."

Opinion: Karzai's Bulky Baggage, an op-ed by I. M. Mohsin in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (01/28)

"Like other powers who got entangled with Af-Pak, due to the geopolitical paradigm or otherwise, the U.S. cannot conquer this area. Secretary Gates on his recent visit bemoaned the mistake made by his country in the 1990 when it abandoned its 'partners' against the Soviets; being flush with the excitement of becoming the 'only superpower'. He assured the people of Pakistan, like Hillary Clinton did on an earlier visit that the U.S. would stick around this time in a friendly and helpful role. The game is now swinging towards diplomacy, despite the facade of expansion of the U.S. troops. Both the sides are trying various tactics to get their pound of flesh. While the U.S. is the superpower, the other party has stood by their history/tradition. Peace and justice must team up. United States' focus on India and China notwithstanding, only Pakistan can help the U.S. out; more so if it has transparent governance."

Opinion: Cold And Blinkered In London, an op-ed by Syed Talat Hussain in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (01/28)

"U.S. Defence Secretary Robert Gates' visit to India and Pakistan last week was a classic study in contradictory behavior. He praised India's role in Afghanistan and mouthed the usual rhetoric about Pakistan being the epicenter of global terrorism.... At a general level, no one was surprised at a U.S. diplomat massaging India's ego and running down Pakistan. This has been the pattern for long. But what was really surprising was the timing of it all: just when Pakistan is poised to become the world's best bet to restore some sanity to Afghanistan's madness, a top-ranking U.S. official chooses to encourage Islamabad's traditional enemy to keep the heat on.... It is regrettable that all the world's supposed best brains cannot comprehend the simple point that in Pakistan's desire to see non-hostile borders with Afghanistan and India lies the key to building consensus on lasting peace for Afghanistan. Powerful world capitals continue to see this demand as a sinister plot to keep the Taliban in Afghanistan's power play. It will be interesting to see whether the outcome of the London Conference would depart from this blinkered approach or not."

Opinion: A Growing Gulf, an op-ed by Tariq Fatemi in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (01/28)

"The growing anti-American sentiments in Pakistan are not confined to the parties; these are shared by many liberals. The Pakistani leadership has demonstrated naivety in its dealings with the U.S., with many of our leaders convinced that the road to power in Islamabad lies through Pennsylvania Avenue. They have therefore ignored the counsel of their own professionals. Of course, this has been more pronounced with the authoritarian rulers. It is therefore not surprising that while Pakistan has 'served' America's interests at critical times, forging strategic ties has been a difficult exercise. In particular, the Americans have tended to take Pakistan for granted.... Robert Gates wrote about the U.S. 'commitment to a stable, long-term, strategic relationship, based on shared interests and mutual respect that will continue to expand and deepen the profile of Pakistan.' If that is the case then the U.S. must appreciate Pakistan's security concerns on its eastern frontier and help it overcome its debilitating energy shortage, by the sale of civilian nuclear technology, of course with the necessary safeguards. Pakistan, too, will have to reinforce its struggle against the militants, pursue a dialogue with India and promote peace and stability in Afghanistan."

Opinion: Meeting India's Military Challenge, an op-ed by Muneer Akram in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (01/28)

"During U.S. Defence Secretary Gates' recent visit, we have again heard the refrain of our Western friends that terrorism and the Taliban, not India, pose an 'existential' threat to Pakistan. But



India's own actions and pronouncements belie these Western assertions. For the past year, India has refused to resume 'composite dialogue' and has regularly threatened military action against Pakistan in the event of another Mumbai-like incident.... Following the post-Mumbai situation and the emergence of India's Cold Start strategy, Pakistan's armed forces have undertaken extensive war games to counter this threat.... Numerous media stories have mentioned the existence of U.S. plans to seize or neutralize Pakistan's nuclear weapons in the event of their threatened take over by Islamic radicals. These plans, if they exist, could be executed also in the context of an Indo-Pakistan conflict.... Despite the present counter-terrorism alliance with the U.S., Pakistan needs to factor in these scenarios into its deterrence posture and doctrine.... A clear and visible response by Pakistan is essential to convince India, and the international community, that Pakistan is determined to defend its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and that 'cold start' could end in a hot finish."

Opinion: Anger Sans Reason, an op-ed by I.A. Rehman in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (01/28)

"If earnest efforts to revive normal relations between India and Pakistan are not mounted soon the demons of hate will push them further away from each other.... An immediate objective before New Delhi and Islamabad should be the reactivation of the hotline between their top leaderships. They can have better success in damage control than the bureaucrats who mostly specialize in stoking up bitterness without reason."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)  
Patterson